

THE NASSAU LITERARY MAGAZINE.

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VOL. XLI.

MAY, 1885.

No. 1

Natural Transcendentalism in Literature.

THE BAIRD PRIZE ORATION, BY CHARLES F. MCCLUMPHA, '85, NEW YORK.

LITERATURE has a soul as well as a body, and that soul has ever been transcendental; at first, a transcendentalism calm, marking the advancement and deliverance of the spirit of man; then, a transcendentalism militant and distrustful of the progress of science; and finally, as in the transcendental movements of the literature of the nineteenth century, manifesting a sympathy with external nature. Of all the struggles that literature has ever experienced for the preservation of its soul, that against the materialism of the eighteenth century was the severest; all Europe was its theater, Germany its battlefield. The voice of Immanuel Kant heralded a philosophy of idealism, declaring that the external world, its phenomena, its history, do not depend upon the experience; that mind, its speculations, aspirations and dreams are not to be mocked as fine-spun myths.

Hence to the transcendentalist matter exists in appearances which depend on the relation between it and mind,

while mind itself is the only reality. To him, "thought is the universe, his experience the procession of facts, you call the world, flowing perpetually outward from an invisible, unsounded center in himself." Thus it is that material particles can be transferred into intimate relationship with the soul, that imagination can bridge the gulf between inner self and outer world, between the subtlest thought and the dancing atom of yon sunbeam. Could gross materialism give nobler scope than this to scientific progress? Grand, indeed, is the contemplation of the dust of stars, of the vibration of nerves, of the yellow globules flitting from pine to pine, of the cellular tissue of the tiniest moss converting the weathered rock into a garden of richest verdure and fruits, but how preëminently impressive the imaginative faith that would link your soul to this mass of creation, now floating on the calm air, and the next instant spinning, glimmering and disappearing on the edge of a chasm of immensity and darkness. Thought, therefore, becomes the mould in which to shape a world; it places in the hand of man the whole power of world-creation and renders simple enough the explanation of its heroes and sages. The mind becomes a stringed instrument whose soft harmonies may float on and on over a troubled sea, smoothing each storm-tossed wave, or whose discordant notes may restore a chaos.

The pages of poetry, for poetry is the interpreter of the soul of literature, has often been painted in dark and mystic colors of doubt and unrest. Shelley cast the gloom of his cold reason over the universe and sung of the "forces of nature" which transformed him into a "kinsman of the wind and of the fire." A modern poet, draining the dregs of pessimism, cries—

* * "Let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
* * * * *

Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

George Eliot has clothed in awful words the necessity of self-renunciation. From "Middlemarch" to "Daniel Deronda" a terrible fatalism overhangs man, and Duty becomes the burden of life. Philosophical speculations have been woven in the brain-loom of man, but life yet remains the problematic, the elusive. A poet, while gazing at the snow-capped summit of Mount Blanc, dared to say, "There is no God;" a philosopher looking into the depths of a dew-drop exclaimed, "God is *there*."

The present is, therefore, a time of disbelief and darkness. "In the second part of Goethe's *Faust* there is a grand and striking scene when the mocking Mephistopheles sits down between the solemn, antique sphinxes, and boldly questions them, and reads their riddles. On either side are beheld the gigantic forms of the children of Chimæra gazing fixedly, as if they heard through the midnight the swift-rushing wings of the Stympthalides. Even so does a scoffing and unbelieving Present sit down between an unknown Future and a too-believing Past, and question the gigantic forms of Faith, half-buried in the sands of time." It is not strange that these doleful and uncertain soul-questionings—unsatisfied with one phase of life, unanswered by the researches of science and self-examination—should revert to a higher faith, divine, rather than human, spiritual than material; that the literature of passion, of despair, of low utilitarianism, should become the literature of transcendentalism.

To the transcendentalist the earth is no longer the prison-house of the soul; the gold and crimson of each evening's sunset no longer the radiance from a divinity dwelling apart on some snowy Olympus; the mystic breath of early spring, no longer mere atoms of air, uttering meaningless cadences; matter is no longer the bar to keep heaven-born

children from their heritage; in fine, the Divine Being is not without and above us, but within and about us, breathing His presence through the frame of the universe. Pass from the marts of men, from the bustle of traffic, from the dust of action; forget, for a moment, that men are obliged to plan and labor in order to accommodate themselves to their environments and cling to the thread of life; enter the temple of science, with its spanning arches and massive buttresses chiseled with the most graceful workmanship of human art; behold, before its altar of investigation, priests, bearing the microscope and scalpel, chanting hymns to Protoplasm, and kneeling before the great god, Evolution. Yet even here, on the very threshold of revelation, the spirit of man offers futile prayers, and learns that the external world cannot be dissected or dissolved.

Transcendentalism has aimed to ignore the Malthusian theory, to shrink from the cellular explanation of matter, to despise the world-packing, frosty crystallizations of philosophy. It has caught the human race blowing bubbles, eating fungi, playing with the chance cards of politics and religion; and to what purpose? The suns and storms of Time have leveled the Parthenons and whitened the bones of Roman armies.

The thoughts of moral beings are reflections of that divine harmony present in all natural phenomena. The neutral-tinted sky, the laughing mountain-brook, the moaning of the forest pines, the perfume clouds floating from nodding flowers, all have their counterparts in the brightest hopes and the saddest sorrows of the human spirit. Emerson says, "Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams." Here the garment of Divinity is used to clothe the universe, the obscure path of life becomes an aisle in the

temple of God. Nature is made the book of life, whose alphabet we can scarcely comprehend, written, as it is, in celestial hieroglyphs, solar systems and electric phenomena. Against these strongholds of faith, billow after billow of scepticism and utilitarianism has been dashing. Men analyze their feelings, and weep to find that the heart is a mere handful of dust. They would weigh their duties in balances, they would call truth expediency, they would term inspiration action, they would preach to the multitude the gospel of gold, but, through transcendentalism, life-action has been spiritualized, transfigured and clothed in "beautiful vague dreams of the real and ideal," living in this green world like the mountain lake which bears upon its bosom the reflection of the blue sky and the mountains overhead.

A Triplet.

A reverent look
 From a gay Easter bonnet,
 As if she forsook
 (Such a reverent look !)
 All the world, save her book ;—
 Are her thoughts fixed upon it?
 A reverent look
 From a gay Easter bonnet.

M.

The Daguerreotypes—A Sketch.

ONE OF the unfortunate results of our rapidly-increasing population is the vacating of the old-fashioned country churches, which in earlier days dotted the roadways or stood upon the neighboring hills or in the quiet groves of the

country. To the conservative mind there is something peculiarly mournful in their removal to the villages. It is, as it were, removing the old land-marks and robbing our rural life of its simplicity and of one of its sweetest charms.

Those old-fashioned country churches, built of rough hewn logs, and with low, narrow windows and weather-boarded gables, or perchance of more pretentious material—of brick or frame—how much romance and what associations are connected with them! Standing in solemn, yet kindly silence, they seemed in our childhood to frown upon our waywardness, or to smile approval of any reverent thoughts. We remember them even yet with mingled feelings of reverence and awe.

If we add to this the burial-ground, with its briar-grown graves and leaning slabs, we have a picture of country life which is still seen in many of our Middle and Western States. It is not uncommon there, on a Sabbath morn in any of the summer months, to see at one of those churches clusters of horses tied to the rack, or vehicles of every variety, from the plain old farm-wagon to the gay and graceful buggy, standing beneath the shade of the trees in the neighborhood of the churchyard, while the service is being held within. Even the old trees seem to have acquired a sort of sacredness through many years of such service.

But this beautiful picture of primitive American life and these scenes are fast fading from sight, and before many years, perhaps, one will have to travel to the far west, or into some remote and sparsely settled neighborhood to witness such a sight.

In the earlier days of New England, country churches were not uncommon, but I am told that there, at the present day, they are very rare. This is owing, no doubt, to the thickly settled condition of the New England States. A house of worship in the old colonial times was the most public place of resort, and it gradually drew around it the

other public houses of the neighborhood, the store, the blacksmith shop and the post office, until there grew up there a village, in which the newer churches of the various denominations were located. But the idea seems to be abroad that the village is the proper place for the church, and when any denomination desires a new edifice, the old one in the country is abandoned, and another graceful spire shoots up among the village houses. So rapidly and surely is this idea gaining a hold that, in traveling across the State of New York the past summer, I saw but few country churches, while the neat, modest frame edifice, with its stained-glass windows and tall white spire, or the more substantial brick, with slate roof and deep windows, greeted me in every village and hamlet through which the train passed.

In Ohio the country "meeting-house," as it is familiarly called, is still quite common. But even here the vacant and dilapidated church, often seen by the highway, is evidence that the same feeling is abroad.

There is something peculiarly touching in the sight of one of these deserted old places of worship. They have a tender, though perhaps unwritten, history. Here, at some time, the gospel may have been preached by some pious evangelist with mighty power, and the deepest and holiest feelings may have been awakened.

In the course of a short trip through one of the inland counties of Ohio during the last summer vacation, I passed by an old and deserted church. It stood just above and by the side of the road, and was surrounded by a little clump of trees, of tall slender oak. A scene of indescribable beauty spread out on every side of it—of neighboring farm-houses and orchards bending with ripening fruit, of green woodlands enclosed by brown meadows and fields of grain, of lovely valleys where cattle broused or reclined beneath the cool shade along the quiet stream—God's temple alone, stood in the midst of this joyous picture of life and beauty,

the only object from which his presence seemed to have taken its flight.

It was indeed a mournful sight. The chimney, uncared for through many years, had crumbled away until it scarcely rose above the sunken roof, upon which pieces of brick lay bleaching in the rain and sun; its weather-boards were eaten by time and gray through neglect of paint, the bright sunlight streamed through its broken windows or shone with a ghost-like glare upon the panes of glass, and as the rays fell upon the altar and the plain old pews within, a smile was reflected back as cold and solemn as that which shone from the marble slabs in the church-yard without.

My curiosity was aroused to know what history was connected with this plain but venerable old house, and why it had been abandoned, for it seemed to me that here, if anywhere on this goodly earth, in the midst of these rural delights, there ought to be a temple of praise in honor of their Creator.

I learned upon inquiry that it had once been the property of a religious sect which is to-day the most numerous and aggressive in that country—a sect noted in the early days for its religious fervor and simplicity of worship; that it had been built by the earliest settlers of that neighborhood, while the country was as yet an unsubdued wilderness; that the church had been a strong one and in the days of its strength had experienced many deep and powerful awakenings, but as the old fathers of the congregation, through whose piety it had been established and whose venerable presence was so long wont to be seen at the weekly service, passed away, it gradually declined until, a new church being built in the neighboring village, the people went thither to worship and the old one was deserted altogether. This, in short, was all the history that the world had preserved of a house dedicated by the pioneers of that lovely country to the worship of their religion, and that, too, preserved only in the memories of a few, would

soon fade and be forgotten. The little cemetery connected with the church, that contained the dust of departed saints and sinners alike, was also a sad case of neglect. It was completely occupied by tall weeds and briars and a luxuriant growth of grass.

One stone among those well-nigh hidden by the briars which covered the yard, attracted my attention more than any other. It was of medium height and pyramidal shape, except that its apex was crowned with a small cap of marble. A solitary foot-path led up through the wilderness of weeds and briars to the spot. On approach, I perceived that it had been erected to the memory of a young soldier who had been killed in one of the battles of the civil war. The particulars of his enlistment were carved upon its base, together with a testimony to his bravery and virtues.

Sunken in the face of the marble and just above the inscription was a metallic case. The lid fastened with a clasp and was green with mold and moss.

Supposing it to contain some further particulars of the young man's history, my curiosity led me to examine the clasp to see if it might permit a look within. It required but a slight effort with a pen-knife, and the spring which was half-eaten by rust gave way. My suppositions were false. Instead of any further words whereby the history of the brave young soldier might be known, there were two daguerreotypes of ordinary size. The features of the one were dim, and scarcely discernable. The face had faded until nothing more than the mere outline could be recognized, but it was that of a soldier. The shoulders were broad and powerful, the body strong and handsomely built. The coat, ornamented with brass buttons and belt, was that of a common soldier.

There were no means of determining whether the face had been correspondingly handsome or not, but it was difficult to imagine it otherwise, and my imagination readily pictured a brave and handsome one.

The *other* daguerreotype appeared to have been inserted but recently, and, though doubtless of equal age, every feature was perfectly recognizable. It was that of a young girl of apparently not more than seventeen years of age. There was a sweet smile upon her face which contrasted strangely with the dismal surroundings. She was dressed in the tasteful, though modest, attire worn by country maidens of that early period. The face was an uncommonly lovely one—such a one indeed as might easily have captivated the heart of a soldier—for there was about it a look of perfect freedom and confidence. I gazed long upon the two pictures before me, and a thousand thoughts swelled tumultuously in my breast. Who was the lovely girl? What relation to the one who had perished at Shiloh in his country's service? Were they lovers?

I afterward learned that the daguerreotypes had been taken as the last pledge of love when, at the outbreak of the Rebellion, he went in defense of the old flag. He carried her picture with him through victory and defeat and upon every march until he laid down his life in Tennessee. When he was brought home to be buried in the little graveyard of the old church where they had both worshipped, she thus placed his picture in the stone which marked his resting place, and day by day she came to render the sacrifice of a pure heart at the grave of her dead lover. When, but a year ago, with her love still young and her heart undivided, she was placed by his side, her picture was also placed with his.

The old church is unoccupied, the graveyard unfrequented, but the wild roses still visit the abode of the lovers and bloom through the long summer.

ARIEL.

Second Childhood.

ONE silent evening by the mighty sea,
In pensive mood, when every circumstance
Gives birth to thought, I saw a child advance
And cast the rounded pebbles wantonly
On Ocean's breast, with innocence and glee.
He knew not why he loved, yet loved indeed.
Next came a careworn man, who gave no heed
To Nature's teachings or her beauty free;
His world-bound heart loved not, and knew not joy.
An old man next, who felt the silent power
Of that sad scene, laughed like a hopeful boy;
He saw his death approaching like a shower
Which breaks upon the sea, yet could enjoy
His last weak years in hope of Heaven's dower.
He seemed to clasp hands with the thoughtless boy,
And both to walk in Nature's deep delight;
One wise in years, the other wise in joy.
Tell me, is Manhood wisdom's greatest height,
Or Childhood and Old Age, the one just sent,
As Wordsworth sings, from the immortal shore,
While for the gray-haired seer the veil is rent,
Dividing Finite Time from Evermore!

W. RANKIN, '86.

Social Problems in Victor Hugo's Works.

IT IS ONLY when on the anvil of impression and under the hammer of conviction that literary genius acquires that burning intensity requisite to brand its opinions on the minds of those whom it reaches. Add to this zeal, the justice of a cause, and the effect is doubled. Such combinations are rare. But far above the mass of merely mechanical workers and those who, in turn, tower above mediocrity, rise Titans. These have a purpose. They aim to benefit mankind. England gives us Thomas Carlyle as a champion of reform. France offers Victor Hugo, the

advocate of liberty. Carlyle as a philosopher, Hugo a poet, and they meet on common ground, the amelioration of pernicious public policy as regards the poor and unfortunate. Neither had what the world calls religion, and yet both had that higher communion, that inner adoration of divinity and its essence, which is permitted to genius, because genius borders on the Infinite. If Hugo is a Jupiter Tonans, as a critic has called him, then we can also call Carlyle the cloud-crashing Zeus. But here their ways part. The sour and splenetic old man of Chelsea is quite another picture than the keen but kindly old man of Guernsey. Carlyle is a stay-at-home-by-the-fire-and-growl-at-mankind nineteenth century seer. Hugo is a picture-the-world-as-it-is-but-strive-to-improve-it Utopian century prophet. Which proves that man's mental status depends on the physical as well as the moral atmosphere he breathes or creates. English fog—result, Carlyle. Sunny breezes of France and the Channel Islands—result, Hugo. We are not, however, drawing parallels. It is with Hugo's attitude towards questions of the day we are to deal. In the face of great problems he is not silent. He is no Apostle of Indifference. He does not soar into the sky and, calmly looking at the purulent plague-spots of the social fabric, theorize and speculate on their remedy. Theorize he does, but he tries his theories. Speculate he does, but he suggests solutions. He has practiced what he professes and preaches to others. This gives the authority of actuality to his expressions. We feel a consistent power behind the throne. When Hugo waves the red rag of Republicanism in the eyes of an enraged and scandalized society, it is not that he, rich, can gain by the triumph of labor over capital, that he, honored, envies any elevated above him. But he believes in the ultimate perfectibility, from a human standpoint, of the race, and seeks its consummation. Liberty of thought is compatible only with liberty of person. Therefore, he argues, the world needs freedom to reach a state of human

perfection, for on personal liberty is built education, and the last stage of earthly happiness is, necessarily, founded on an enlightened mind and conscience.

What questions, then, form the bases of his works? The stanching of social sores, the abolition of abuses, and, as a corollary, the suppression of sin and its consequent—suffering. And, pervading all, the resolution of political problems. Hugo translates the tremulous tones of woe and paints pictures which wring the heart. For these whom does he arraign? Society, which strives to stifle the wail of misery. Carping criticism maintains that this generation cannot be blamed for the deeds, or their effects of past ones. The law is inevitable. The sins of fathers are visited on their children. This idea runs through all his works, where, stand out, like veins, the ethical problems of the century. Three of these he states in the preface to "*Les Misérables*." Man, Woman, the Child; the strong, the weak, the helpless; the fall of the first, the frailty of the second, the misfortune of the third; the fight of all three against the common foe, Famine. He inveighs against the perverted public sentiment which brands indelibly the criminal, and, seeing the effect, does not weigh the cause. There is a brutal instinct in man with regard to the stranger or unfortunate. Among barbarians it takes the form of slaughter, amidst a common civilization it is kicking a man when down, in refined circles it is the uncharitableness of the back-biter. But Hugo begins with Faith in the masses, and Hope for the future, and Charity follows as a matter of course. Negative fallen virtue, whether in man or woman, rouses all his sympathies. Virtue, that is, which yields to crushing circumstances, not to mere depravity. Hugo shows us the man not without a country, but worse, the man without a home; not the exile from fatherland, but from society. Valjean, the outlaw, Fantine, the outcast, are differentia of the same genus. But though generic, they are, alas, but too individualized; not a class,

but its exceptions. We are not discussing the doctrine of chances. But presupposing the story as premise, and accepting its truth, we discuss Hugo's treatment of that dream of social philosophers, the reclamation and reformation of the criminal.

Hugo, however, does more than give us the reformed convict. The Neologism of the nineteenth century has given us Altruism. Hugo gives us the typical Altruist. Valjean is a self-denying saint the rest of his life. Fantine, degraded not by depravity, but through a sublimity of self-devotion, comes out, though too late, purified in the fire of utter self-sacrifice. Does Hugo, by such a story, put a premium on vice? By no means. But he shows the indifference of society and the possibilities of a reformation whose fruits of good will be so much the greater—as much as the purified moral sense from which they spring is in greater contrast to an antecedent evil state. What then is Hugo's recipe for the change? Liberty, Education and Moral Enlightenment. He believes in a Progress in store for Poverty; that Social Science and Labor and Capital mean something concrete; that they are no longer *hapoz legomena* in this or that ethical code. The critics of monarchical Europe cry out that this will land us in communism. But is communism a crime? Even a red-handed Radicalism that smears with blood whatever it touches, does not invalidate though it may disfigure the principle it represents. But Hugo's communism in ethics, whatever it is in politics, is not bloodthirsty. He is indignant, fierce, but it is the righteous indignation of honesty of purpose. He holds up to the self-complacent Pharisaism of an indifferent world the results of its neglect, the two resultants of pauperism—crime and social evils. Heal these two and the child is saved. But luxurious ease engenders moral blindness and the poor perish, unseen and unaided.

Whatever unsubstantiality differing views may assign to such opinions, we soon come to a positive philosophy. Hugo regards the Draconian era as past. The death-penalty is,

to him, the crime of the century. He protests against the barbarity of the "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" code of a past civilization. Here, again the economist steps in, pointing to statistics and the stern facts of trial and nonsuccess to prove the fallacy of the proposition. But Hugo's open sesame in moral problems is the same. Let Liberty, political and theological, be a universal perquisite, and you will need no death-penalty. In a world of letters, he is a literary John the Baptist. And he reverses the rule of the class novel. For he gets universality as audience. Hugo is a disciple of Lamennais in his philosophical, not religious, tenets, for the latter offers that marvelous antithesis, the combatant for political freedom in State and theocratic absolutism in church. Hugo, by birth Aristocrat, politically Jacobin, discards the last. The key to his works is Fatality. Not the passive Kismet of the lithargic Mohammedan, but the active, inexorable Anagkē of the busy Greek. A doctrine not jarring with Providence, but its expression. Finally, there has arisen lately a school, that of realism, which has descended by successive stages of degradation into that of moral filth known as the realistic. But reality in delineation may usefully be divorced from realism. The attempt of captions critics to apply the Empedoclean doctrine to Hugo has signally failed. He is no lover of vice out of sympathy. Hugo draws the line between the Tolon school and himself. He has a high aim—to heal. They pander to a morbid curiosity. He is his own defender, both in words and works.

From the special phase we have treated, three points detach themselves clearly. First: Moral enlightenment is a means for an end—social regeneration. Society is responsible for the use of this means to this end. But it can only reach this end, believing and employing the last of the trio of that glorious revolutionary watchword—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Secondly: Praise the fallen and spare the victim of circumstances. If a guilty few do escape merited punishment this will in the general account be placed to the

credit of this world's charity. Lastly: When the world is purified by education and the liberty of the individual, there will be no more vicious instincts to cater to, and no more vice to picture through its literature. Though the world can never reach this millennial stage, it can approach very near to it. Then Literature and Democracy, the two factors in the world's progress, touch and form the product—man in his highest development. It is only as we reach after the perfected, now Utopian, Republic of men, that we touch most closely the perfected, now ideal, Republic of letters.

ROLAND.

Belated.

SNOW-BIRD, snow-bird, why so tardy
 For the northland spreading wing?
 Over hill and wood and valley
 Creeps the misty green of spring.
 Don't you hear the waters falling?
 Don't you hear the robins calling?
 Blue-back swallow
 Soon will follow,
 And the thrushes blithe will sing.
 See your dress, so sad and sombre;
 It was meant for winter drear;
 And you seem surprised and silent
 By the springtime of the year.
 Through the budding branches gliding,
 In the shade of fences hiding,
 Never you heard
 Of a blue-bird
 Splashing in the shallows clear?
 Soon on every orchard hillside
 Will be banks of fragrant bloom,
 Like your snowfields in the northland,
 Only warm with rich perfume.
 Is this why you do not go?
 Wait you for the scented snow?
 In its cover
 Hideth summer;
 It, poor bird, will be thy doom!

The Gossamer.

AN ARMENIAN LEGEND.

"MANY years ago, before the Turk—may his name be accursed forever—came into our fair country, when all our people worshipped the blessed Christ, there stood upon the slopes of Ararat, apart from all other habitations, a little cottage. Its inhabitants were an old man of Persian face and priestly dress and a young girl, of whose appearance little was known, for although most unmaidenly she roamed the wooded slopes of the mountains, yet she fled from the presence of our young Armenian hunters, swifter than the deer which they there pursued. The women of our country, however, if they do differ in reserve from American ladies, still have their full share of curiosity, and are as artful as any in satisfying it. Thus they soon reported, with unconscious malice, that the girl shunned comparison with our dark-eyed country maidens, with their ripened color and raven hair, because her face possessed no beauty, but was pale as marble, and the wave of gold, which the hunters described as following her flight, was a mass of unkempt hair of the reddest sort!

"Soon whispers spread the rumor that they were heathen *Gragabashd!* as our tongue calls those whom you more pleasingly denominate Guebers, or Fire-worshippers. On some slight foundation of truth, report spread that, in penance for some horrible crime, he lived as an exile, and had devoted his daughter to the priestly service of his deity.

"Why he had chosen Ararat for his home remained a mystery, yet there in its holy shadow he lived and practiced his infernal rites.

"How a man could dwell in such a favored spot and remain an infidel can only be explained by the hardened heart and haughty contempt of a depraved Gueber. Above

him, far in the depths of Heaven, and still pointing with its snow-white finger higher and higher, until the proudest eye must have quailed, and the stiffest neck bowed in awe of the Creator, rose the grand old peak of Ararat. Down through the green of the tree-tops its snowy splendor gleamed upon the cottage of the Gueber, yet he looked not up, save to salute the sun in his meridian glory.

"Here in the very center of the world, perchance on the very spot where the smoke of the first sacrifice of a purified world arose to Noah's God, he paid his unholy adorations to the same false god whom the wicked worshipped who were drowned in the Deluge.

"Even when his god of a day was passing away in the evening, and the shadows of the sacred mountain, the immutable and eternal, fell upon his home, even then unholy prayers and chantings were heard by the passer-by, who crossed himself and hurried on in terror. None durst put themselves in reach of his conjurations, and shunned the place and its wooded neighborhood.

"Then the war with our Persian oppressors arose, and the righteously indignant Armenians would have risen and put him and his daughter to death, and sacrificed his cottage to his god of Fire, had they not been restrained by a friend of the old Persian, young Vahan, the bravest and noblest young man of the realm, son of our leader, Vartan.

"I said Prince Vahan was a friend of the Persian; he was, more truthfully, the lover of his daughter. Before the outbreak of the war he was hunting on the slopes of Ararat. Lost in a reverie of high thoughts of noble deeds for his country's good, he had allowed his horse to drop into a slow and noiseless walk over the thick carpet of pine-needles, the work of all the centuries since the Flood.

"Suddenly he heard a voice, 'What shall I suffer to rid my father of his terrible curse?' There, underneath a pine on a brook's side, with hands uplifted to a ray of sunlight which streamed through the green roof above, stood a

being, to Vahan's deluded eyes the ideal of all beauty and purity and truth.

"Oh, spirit of the earth, or air, or light, or water, for thou seemest to be the soul of all; oh, dryad of the pine, or naiad of the brook, or sylph of the sunbeam, what can Vahan do to reverence, or, if thou art mortal, to aid thee?" he cried. Perhaps it was his noble face and earnest mien that assured her that he was none of the rough peasant lads whom she had before time fled, or perchance the beautiful witch had already begun to practice her evil enchantments; anyway she listened to his words, and told her name and condition,—that she dwelt near by with her father, the Persian; and invited him to their cottage.

"Thenceforth Vahan spent his days in hunting and his nights in dreaming of the maiden whom he daily met by the brook, under the great pine on the mountain side. His dreams were of a maiden fair and holy featured as the Virgin, and rich in a flood of hair fine as though spun of sunbeams.

"Oh, the craft of a wicked woman! How she seemed to love him! Then the Persian war began. How her tenderness increased! The youth of Armenia hastened with joy to the frontier, but Vahan still wasted his days in hunting. His parents upbraided him, his companions besought him, the wise men reminded him of his former deeds and the present need of him to lead the Armenians to victory, but still he would not go. Often he promised to go to-morrow, but to-morrow found him at the hunt, and again to-morrow found him on his hunting steed departing to the mountain cottage, earnestly resolved to take that farewell embrace which another to-morrow again renewed.

"Perhaps at that time she really loved Vahan, and wished him safe from the dangers of war; yet after-facts seem to indicate that love for her fellow-countrymen, the Persian Guebers, prompted her enticements to delay the young Armenian hero, the flower of the army.

"The entreaties of his parents and friends at last prevailed, and Vahan departed to the war. Before his advent, the Persians had been almost uniformly victorious, but now the bravery and generalship of the new leader aroused the despairing Armenians to renewed courage, and the tide of victory was turned.

"Meanwhile, spies had discovered in the mountain-cottage the cause of the prince's long delay. Thenceforth it was continually watched, and one night a man was captured departing stealthily from the place. His speech and brave attempt to outrun the horsemen, proved him to be one of the swift Persian couriers. He carried a message from the old Persian Fire-worshipper containing evidence of the most diabolical treachery, the revelations of all of Vahan's plans, which he must have revealed to the old man in his confidence and enthusiasm. At the end, there was a plot for luring the prince into ambush and capturing him.

"The courier was shot at once, and the old man and his daughter dragged before the court of Armenia. The father confessed all, and with erect form and flashing eyes even boasted of the partial success of his plans. He begged piteously, though, for the life of his daughter, and said that she knew nothing of the plan for Vahan's betrayal, and that even he loved the young man so that he had planned capture where death would have been more easily accomplished. So great was the people's love for their prince that their rage knew no bounds. The old man was condemned to death by fire. He stood in the midst of the flames more like a martyr than the accursed sorcerer that he was, and cried as the fire raged about him, "Oh Spirit of Fire, I thank thee that my sin against thee is purified in thy embrace!"

"Such was the force of the father's entreaties, and such was the saintly beauty of her own pure face, that many would have freed the maiden. But many a beauty among the court ladies, on whom Vahan had ever looked with in-

difference, could scarce restrain their nails from plowing that face, whose crime, in their eyes, was not that it had caused Armenia the loss of many victories, but that it had conquered the love of Vahan.

"She was condemned to the milder death by the sword, though many thought her a viler magician than her father, so wickedly fair was her enchantment of beauty, for our priests tell us in the words of the Holy Book, that the devil often appears as an angel of light.

"While she lay in prison, awaiting execution, Vahan heard of her condition. Cursing her judges and betrayers, he took horse for the capital. He rode like the wind, night and day, and even his Koordish mare that under a forayer had journeyed for three days without food or rest, whose limbs were like marble in their firmness, dropped dead on the second morning. Four horses died beneath the furious rider, and then he was too late.

"On the morning of his arrival, the maiden had been brought into the public square and taken upon the platform constructed in its center. None of the spectators had ever seen so beautiful a being. Down from her queenly head, about the fairest of faces and loveliest of forms, clear to her feet, fell the richness of her hair, soft and silken as the spider's thread, and glorious as the sunlight. This the executioner cut off, to allow the free sweep of his sword. The vindictive Queen, Vahan's mother, was by her side, and she gathered up the locks as they fell. As she scattered them to the four winds, she laid a curse upon them, saying, 'Oh, gleaming locks of the Fire-witch, that like a marsh-light would have lured my son to destruction, be ye scattered to the four corners of the world, to be a witness to Armenian and Persian, to Christian and Infidel, of the wickedness of this enchantress! A curse be upon you, that ye rest not forever, either upon the earth or sea or in the heaven, that the memory of her treachery may ever be alive!'

"As she ended, down the street in the distance came Vahan, urging a wearied steed and crying, 'Innocent! Innocent!' But the executioner was deaf to all commands, save the Queen's, and blind to all beauty, even that of a saint, for saint the maiden surely seemed, with her shorn locks of gold surrounding her sorrowful face, as the halo hovers over the weeping Mother Mary. The great two-handed sword whistled through the air, and the enchantress was no more. The Queen and all that were there, fled like cowards from the raving curses of Vahan. All alone he mourned over her body, and then departed to throw away his life in desperate battle with the Persians. He and Vartan, his father, perished on that day Armenia was freed.

"Still over the hills and valleys, forests and streams, float the silken hairs on which the curse was laid. They rest not; neither on the earth below nor in the heaven above, but float forever between them, a memorial to all the world of the saint-like enchantress; and the little Armenian children say, as they find the long golden threads stretching over the meadows in motionless suspense, 'There floats the *Chure-Vosdein*, the spirit spider thread, that would have caught Vahan in its meshes!'

"But over in Persia they revere the old man and his daughter as patriot martyrs and look on the gossamer as a memorial of that virtue which triumphs over love and death itself. Thus we see that a devil to one nation may, to the misguided people of another, be the holiest of saints and martyrs.

"However it may be, whether she was angel or fiendish enchantress, the Armenians to this day cannot abide red hair."

MARIUS.

Stony Brook.

UPON the banks of Stony Brook
The sycamores grow tall,
Their snowy bark shines through the leaves,
Their dreamy shadows fall.

Her meadows are of richest green,
And spread from either bank;
The daisies and the violets
Peep through the grasses rank.

Beside the quaint old rustic bridge
Which spans, with arches gray
The gentle stream, the old mill stands,
And grinds the livelong day.

Dear Stony Brook, sweet classic stream,
What charms surround thy name!
Italian rills may boast renown,
But not a fairer fame.

Where now thy peaceful meadows lie
Outspreading to the sun,
The battle raged for freedom once,
And victory was won.

O lovely vale, O placid brook,
Fit place for Muses' home!
When learning's task our hearts oppress
By thy green banks we'll roam.

"ARIEL."

The Republican River.

A KANSAS SKETCH.

I HAVE never believed in fatalism; but it seems that a destiny rules my life with a firmer hand and a harder heart than that of others. The one strange and inexplicable thing about it is that, although I was born in an inland

State and in a village at least forty miles from any stream worthy of the name of river, my life has always been affected by a river in another State, far away from my birth-place. I was a boy of seven summers when first I saw this stream which since has wrought such changes in my worldly existence. I stood on the bank with my dear father, under the shade of elms and oaks, spreading but all knarled and stunted in their upward growth by the hard blasts of wind from the wild surface of the boundless prairie. The squirrels played and barked over our heads. The song of the thrush and the whistling of the red-bird from the copse of hazel near by, mingled with the distant notes of the meadow-lark on the prairie just beyond, filled the air with cheerful music. The water, clear as crystal, flowed over a bed of rock and shining pebbles. By looking closely, you could see fish—pickerel and bass—slowly working their way up stream. The whole scene, so beautiful and tempting, took my boyish fancy and caused me to clap my little hands with joy. I remember it well. I wanted to fish, but my father wouldn't let me. I cried and went home disappointed. After that I used to run away and go to the river. It infatuated me, but, strange to say, I always went home the worse for it. If I fished I would never catch anything except myself, probably; if I went swimming, or rather wading, for I couldn't swim, the sun would be sure to blister my back; if I tried to dig out a king-fisher's nest, the bank would invariably give way and precipitate me into the water. In fact I always met with adversity.

One August day my father made my boyish happiness complete by asking me if I didn't wish to go with him and some friends on a hunting and fishing expedition down the Republican river? The time came and found us snugly camped several miles from town. At sunset all portended well; but in the night we were awakened by deafening peals of thunder. The air was close and oppressive; not a leaf stirred. The inky sky was filled with gleaming streaks

of forked lightning, which ran from zenith to horizon in rapid zig-zag courses. Beneath this electric glow, the river showed a stream of fire—a Phlegethon on earth. The scene was truly sublime; but we looked upon it not with admiration, for fear was too great in our hearts. Miles from home and shelter, we knew we were at the mercy of the storm. It gathered strength, and with overwhelming force came on us apace. The close air suddenly gave way to a stifling blast. Trees which had stood the western storms for years were now swayed to the earth, twisted asunder or entirely uprooted by this tornado. Our tent was blown away like a feather, and we only managed to stay on earth by keeping our faces on the ground in a little niche in the river bank. And now the rain fell, not like it does in New England on an afternoon in May, where children, in their play, hold up their faces to be kissed by the big, good-natured drops, but in torrents which at once drenched to the skin and chilled the body through. The river rose rapidly and roaring past us, hurled defiance at the storm, and scorned to pity us in our distress. Oh, cruel nature! Three weeks later I was convalescent. The exposure had been too great for my boyish constitution, and I had been stricken down with a fever. I asked for father. They hushed me up. My mother looked so anxious and careworn. I grew stronger, and then I heard the worst. Two weeks later, with my sorrowing mother, I followed his remains to our old home in the East, little realizing that I would never more know a father's care.

* * * * *

Fifteen years passed away and I again visited the West. The change was marvelous. When in my childhood I could look for miles over the rolling prairies, as wild as when the continent was discovered, and find no limit and no marks to guide the eye save now and then a solitary cedar on a distant bluff or the curling smoke from a lonely settler's hut in the valley—where then was a wilderness

was now acre upon acre of green wheat and oats and sprouting corn. On all sides the roofs of farm-houses and barns and granaries and the towers and arms of wind-mills glistened in the bright rays of the warm sun and made me think of the scene from the mast-head of a steamship nearing port, when all around are sails of white and in the distance the misty form of land with its light-houses and the city beyond. The village where we had lived was now a thrifty town, full of trade and life. The Republican river alone remained unchanged. It had for me the same infatuation as of old, and I loved to stroll along its banks at twilight and listen to the moan of the swaying elms and the laughing ripple of its lucid waters. It made me sad, but still it cheered me, for how much better we remember the joys of childhood than its sorrows!

On the other side of the river from the village was now built a large gothic stone mansion. It was situated near an angle of the stream and a beautiful grove of forest trees. It was the property of Squire Brunson, a retired New York merchant, who was attracted to B—— by the fine scenery, and the opportunity he had for loaning money at a high rate of interest. His family consisted of a wife and two charming daughters, Marie and Essie by name. I saw them first while taking my customary walk on the river bank. Marie was clad in a close-fitting suit of gray, Essie all in white. Both were beautiful, both were shapely, but Marie, the elder, was taller and more graceful. Her sister was very dark, with black hair and eyes. Marie had light brown hair, a clear fair complexion, decided Grecian features and dark brown eyes, "all light and truth."

* * * * *

I had returned to B—— in June. It was now September, and the most enjoyable part of the year. The air was no longer hot and full of sand, but pure and exhilarating. The corn was waving high in the fields, and the farmers busy with the sowing of wheat.

The talk of the town was the new iron bridge over the Republican river. The old wooden one had been condemned and torn down, and now, while the new one was being erected, for a means of crossing the people had to resort to the old ford, almost in front of Squire Brunson's house, where of late I had been a frequent visitor (on business, of course). Yes, Marie and I had grown to be friends, and now I was not so much addicted to solitary walks and gloomy meditations. The river had been too high to cross with ease for some days, and I had greatly missed my customary calls. So one Wednesday night I determined to mount my trusty saddle-horse and swim the stream. As the water came around my rubber armor, it seemed unusually cold and icy; it chilled me through and made me shudder, for it called too vividly to mind the sad experience it had already given me. I met with a welcome on the other side so hearty, and spent an evening so enjoyable, that it was late when I took my departure. The air was warm outside and calm. The moon was shining with a dull lustre between the rifts of ominous-looking clouds. Marie stepped on the veranda with me, and then, laughing and joking together, we walked down the spacious lawn to the river side. The splash of the water as it fell over the mill-dam a short distance above, the distant tinkling of sheep bells and the occasional croaking of a frog were all that broke the hushed silence of the scene. We looked toward the new bridge, where its strong piers stood up like huge Titans in the dim moonlight. I asked her if she enjoyed being a "Hero?" "Why, don't you know Hero lived in Sestos, Leander, her lover, in Abydos, and every night he used to swim the Hellespont to meet her?" "Oh, yes," she said, "I remember that, but I always hated the story, for at last poor Leander lost his life in a storm. Please don't speak of such cruel myths." I took the white hand extended to me, pressed it to my lips and said, "good-bye," then threw myself into the saddle and rode into the

water. I had gone but a few feet when a shriek from Marie caused me to halt. I heard a low, hissing sound. I looked up stream. I could see but half of the huge stone piers of the bridge. The truth flashed upon me. A flood was coming. I could not reach the bank in time. Did it mean death? I grasped the branch of an overhanging elm, and drew myself up, and just in time, for under me rolled a seething, roaring torrent. I saw my horse go under. In the hungry flood, houses, with men clinging to them, shouting for help, were borne along. Miles above, a water-spout had fallen, and with its mighty force had washed away the mill-dam and now was carrying all before it.* It was terrible! And that one shriek had warned me, saved me! On the banks of the Republican river I met my fate in the clear pure depths of those dark brown eyes. MAX.

Triolets of Tennis.

HE.

"AH ME! with what a witching grace
 She wields that lucky racquet!
 How queenly is her pose and pace!
 Ah me! with what a witching grace
 She serves the ball! How fair her face,
 With such a smile to back it!
 Ah me! with what a witching grace
 She wields that lucky racquet!"

SHE.

"His tennis suit becomes him well;
 He's quite a handsome player.
 If Hattie only wouldn't tell!—
 His tennis suit becomes him—Well,
There's Harry flirting there with Nell,
And I can be still gayer!
 His tennis suit becomes him well;
 He's quite a handsome player."

*For minute description of this awful waterspout, see *Kansas City Times* for Sept. 21, 1883.

HATTIE.

"Aha! I see how lies the land,
And what is all the trouble!
Her game is plain to understand—
Aha! I see how lies the land;
She's playing 'singles' with her hand,
Her heart is playing double!
Aha! I see how lies the land,
And what is all the trouble!"

M.

Voices.

This department, while it will discuss various topics of general interest and importance, is mainly intended as headquarters for the free expression of college sentiment. It will also be found the rendezvous for those effusions which deal in a more or less romantic style, with piquant episodes, but which do not aspire to the dignity and length of the so-called sketch.

THIS brief *résumé* of the character the "Voices" shall continue to maintain, is designed, in part, as a labor-saving hint to those pessimistic souls who, dissatisfied with most everything, feel constrained to publish the chimeras of their own hallucinations. Against such as this we propose to maintain a staunch quarantine.

We will take pleasure in voicing college sentiment, partly because we actually believe that there are some things connected with our existence here which are neither inspired nor immutable. We also feel it our duty and privilege to represent the candid opinion of the student body on such matters as, having their interests at stake, render them pre-eminently fitted to judge whether they be for better or for worse. The suggestions we make, therefore, whether they petition for an innovation, a reformation or an abrogation, will, we hope, meet with the same candid consideration and treatment with which they are written. Others, doubtless, have entertained this same hope, but often only to see their fondest hopes unnoticed, regardless of how much their realization would have contributed to the general good. So long as we preserve a steadfast allegiance to the best interests of all, and yet make the discriminations necessary to keep us within our legitimate sphere, there is certainly due to us, in return, other than indifference.

Dr. McCosh's "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy."

WITH the publication of "Herbert Spencer's Philosophy as Culminated in his Ethics," Dr. McCosh has completed a valuable philosophic series, the first numbers of which were published several years ago. The whole plan of this series, in that it condenses, in so short a space, so much matter, is unique in its conception, and supplies a vacancy long felt by those who have little opportunity or inclination to devote much time to the study of philosophic subjects, and yet wish to get a general knowledge of the principal philosophic questions of the past and present. The first four numbers are didactic but historical, expressing in a short space the author's views as to the Tests of Truth, Causation, Development, and the Character of our World. In the remaining volumes, the philosophy especially of Locke, Hume, Kant and Spencer, are historically treated in the light of truths already established. As a consequence of the pamphlets consisting only of from sixty to seventy pages, it has been impossible to give an exhaustive or minute exposition and criticism of the several systems which are considered. The aim rather seems to have been to put into a concise and readable form the leading and distinctive features of each. This is certainly the case in the treatment of Mr. Spencer's philosophical system, since all of his seven ponderous volumes are reviewed in about ten times as many pages. It is to be presumed that this last number will naturally excite more interest than the others, both because of the new impetus given to all forms of speculative reasoning by the evolution hypothesis, and also because it appears as if Mr. Spencer would take a firm hold on America, however coldly he might be received in Great Britain. An opportunity is thus given all to get, in a short space, a general knowledge of the salient points in the line of thought followed by Mr. Spencer. The only objec-

tion that could be made is, that it is sometimes difficult to grasp the full sweep and meaning of Mr. Spencer's reasoning when condensed in such a narrow compass. Of Dr. McCosh's style, it is unnecessary to speak. Always clear and logical, often vivid and fervid, it interests while it instructs, though it never sacrifices truth in order to make a striking sentence. It is peculiarly fitting that his life-long work in the field of philosophy should be completed in a criticism of that great master of speculative thought who, for a time, seemed likely to undermine many long-cherished doctrines and beliefs. Yet he never hesitates to give to Mr. Spencer credit for the many valuable truths he has established, whether it be in the sphere of the physical and mental, or the sphere of the moral and critical world.

Influence of the "Review" on Literary Princeton.

UPON the roll of American Magazines and Reviews the names of a few are placed apart from the rest. As one among these the *Princeton Review* has assumed a high standard and secured a well-earned eminence. But though a shadow has fallen athwart that path which we were accustomed to pursue with profit and entertainment, yet we can now find solace in the assurance that this shadow is only an evanescent one.

During the eclipse of this periodical a modification has been effected, which is to change both its custody and character. Whether these innovations be for the better or not, yet Princeton is to be congratulated on them both. A Review, which shall present in a popular manner the opinions and reasonings of the most able men of the day, and which has for two generations wielded a literary sceptre, is to have its seat in our College community, and to give expression to the best literature that we can boast. The beneficial results

which we can justly expect to be reciprocated upon the general literary tone of the College is that one element which Princeton has conspicuously lacked. The atmosphere which forms the intrinsic character of this College has never been permeated by a high literary tone, nor have its students been imbued with those tastes which have afterwards accomplished much in letters.

We believe, however, that the advent of the *Review* foreshadows a turning-point in the history of this institution. In it we see both the main-spring and the palladium which are to reinforce and cherish that tendency toward a higher literary tone, which our more extended English courses have begun to foster.

During its former existence this periodical has insinuated itself into almost every nook and corner of belles-lettres. It has, as an eminent representative of that class of literature in which this nation has most nearly reached perfection, been a faithful index of our progress. Its readers have ever found in it an example and incentive to sound thinking; their taste has been corrected and purified, their comprehension enlarged, the judgment rendered stronger. Add to this the fact that the new series of this *Review* is to assume a more distinctively literary character, and we have almost an ideal tutelage for literary Princeton.

We may, therefore, with reason expect that from its proximity and relations to Princeton it will largely disseminate throughout the College this same disciplinary influence, and that this, in its turn, will react to give Princeton a literary character worthy of a name.

The Fiction Alcove in our Library.

WHILE he of the classic-loving temperament has no impediment to the complete indulgence of his predilection among the books of his respective alcove, and while

the solitary Math. fiend, provided with every treatise, both great and small, revels in a sea of glory among the dusty volumes of exploded theories, yet they who appreciate the charms of a good novel, and enjoy its solace, have cause to be the discontented set that they are. This dissatisfaction finds its origin and continued stimulus in the fact that our fiction alcove is only partially supplied with the standard works of former generations, while our longing eyes are never refreshed with the sight of a *new* novel. 'Tis not so much the *old* but rather the *new* whose protracted absence we deplore, and whose advent we would hail with unalloyed delight and gratitude. How many hours would "Ramona," "Archibald Malmaison," "Where the Battle was Fought," "In the Tennessee Mountains," have gladdened, if they had found a place in the library several months ago! Why it is the adopted policy not to purchase such novels of real life, so valuable and so interesting, is a question to which it would be extremely hard to frame an adequate answer. But, on the other hand, a whole volume might be constructed of the reasons which we consciously or unconsciously feel, why this policy should be renounced. Is the field of fiction too limited to merit such undue patronage! Is there a symptom that the novel or the romance has lost its popularity as a form of literature among us? If so, it has been produced and fostered by this lack of nurture.

Did Carlyle say that a book should not be read before it is a year old! Granted that he was infallible and that this is true, does it follow, on the same grounds, that the book should not be read, nor even seen, for five years? "A novel means a new tale, a tale of fresh interest." This season of "fresh interest" is while it is being discussed and criticised by the press, and is a topic in society, and not after people have turned from it to later productions. Moreover, this being the time when its literary merit and standard are being settled, it is also the season particularly conducive to the formation of our own individual opinion, or at least one

intelligent enough to vouchsafe when asked, for one may have a scruple about being a blank on a subject of general interest.

The Halls, it may be said, are supposed to furnish the late books, and especially novels. So they do, in part, but not to that half of the college who are not attending members.

Does there exist here a heritage of the old idea that novel reading is a dangerous and improper indulgence, or that these are the books which are only to be tasted? We do not petition for this favor because we find no interest or pleasure in numerous works of our otherwise well-stocked library, nor because a romance registers the high-water mark and the consummation of all our literary tastes. Authorship has not been so prolific in the field of fiction merely for the sake of the fascination it may possess, but because it finds its origin and *alter ego* a vital constituent of human affections. Even were its utility less than it is, how much are we indebted to it for solace and enjoyment! There come times when the routine of didactic employments produces a weariness of the flesh, and when, tired of prosaic haunts, we would fain shake off the drowsiness that hangs on our eyelids. What else, then, in the whole range of literature, can, with such a subtle charm, give relaxation to the weary brain, sweeten a dreary solitude with emotions of delight, win to emulation or rouse into effort, like the delineations met with in the novel, which, perhaps, was opened only for the amusement of an idle hour.

The educational power of the true novel has been highly extolled, and it certainly cannot be denied that this and kindred forms of literature take a radical part in moulding the character, the opinions, the standards, the tastes. The impressions we receive from a truthful reflection of life are almost as vivid and formative as those disseminated by what is passing in the world about us.

But it would seem that, in this time and place, these principles must be to all familiar and conceded, and while

we have taken up each plausible objection to their being more substantially recognized here, we would, after all, rather believe that the fiction alcove in our library exists as it is more from an oversight than from any positive intent. However that may be, we sincerely hope that the joy and gratitude with which we would hail the recent landmarks of fiction is not doomed to disappointment.

The New Proposal of President McCosh.

PRESIDENT McCOSH spoke, some time ago, about introducing a series of *public debates* between the members of the different Halls, and any others who wished to engage in them. These discussions are not to take the place of chapel-stage, but are supplementary to it. For some time a need of such exercises has been felt in Princeton. More students fail in *how to express*, rather than in *what to express*.

This difficulty is overcome only through the repeated practice of public effort. Such exercises would promote our interest in oratory and disputation, and at the same time afford pleasing and instructive entertainments. As things now stand, few of our under-graduates ever appear before the public as participants in extemporaneous debate. About six men from every senior class know what it is to think and speak *extempore*. Now, this experience ought to extend to more men, and for two reasons: First, because it would greatly add to their resources and powers, as speakers, and second, because of the pleasure it would afford even those who do not engage in them. Such contests could be nothing less than attractive.

In view of this, President McCosh has suggested a scheme whereby our two literary societies may engage in a series of public debates. He proposes that during the winter months, occasional contests be held either in the old

Chapel or University Hall, and that the public be invited to attend. He specifies no particular rules by which the contests shall be governed, but leaves it to the supervision of the two societies.

It is not our part to decide how such exercises should be conducted; we would, however, suggest that not more than three be held in one year. It is generally known that, in the future, Senior orations will be delivered upon chapel-stage exclusively during the first term of college year. Accordingly these contests in debate will then come in second term. There are many advantages in having chapel-stage come in first term, both to competitors and judges, but especially is there an advantage in having the contests in oratory precede those in debate. The discipline derived from oratory will aid one in extemporaneous speaking. As a rule, very little *real oratory* is gained from extemporaneous debate. Thus it is a common thing for an inexperienced debater to fall into a certain manner of delivery which he can never throw off. Hence the necessity of having the proper principles of oratory established before exercise in public speaking is begun. These exercises, therefore—*oratory and disputation*—follow in logical order, and, if carried out, will more thoroughly train students for the higher offices of public life. If then a series of debates be arranged for the second term, one to come in January, another in February, and a third in early March, we see no obvious reason why they should not be a success. Let the questions be agreed upon by committees of the Faculty appointed by the Halls, and the contestants be chosen from the Senior and Junior classes by the members of their respective Halls, and, if a decision is desired, let committees of the Faculty belonging to each society be chosen, which will provide competent and impartial judges. When some such method as this is adopted, the exercises will be arranged in a satisfactory and systematic manner.

The objects President McCosh had in view are obvious—the broader developement of the students, and the general prosperity and growth of the college. These ends can be fully reached by the proposed system. The Halls may do their work nobly as far as they go, but they can never, by the present method, bring all their good debaters before the public. By this system new men will be brought out and latent talent developed.

The object should be one of self-improvement on the part of every man who engages in the exercises. To many, this is a proper, and, what is more, a feasible scheme, and one that demands the ready coöperation of every student in college. Let '86 see to it that this series of debates be inaugurated next winter.

G. L. R.

Editorials.

THE DATE of publication will remain unchanged.

SYMPATHY for our readers has been the cause for our omission of the customary formal bow of introduction and the announcement of policy. We shall feel well repaid for our labors if, during the year, we meet with the same hearty approval bestowed on the *LIT.* for the past year. We desire to thank the members of the retiring board for the aid they have given us by suggestion and advice.

ALL THOSE who have read Mr. Matthew Arnold's criticisms on America will be interested in the fact that Mr. Froude, the eminent historian, who is at present traveling in this country, has not found, to any great extent, either in the Western or Eastern States, "the Philistinism," of which Mr. Arnold accused America. Although Mr. Froude does not absolutely deny the existence of such a class in our society, he has so modified Mr. Arnold's statement as to make the truth more acceptable to Americans.

THE *Princetonian* in its new form certainly merits the praise bestowed upon it by all its readers, and we desire to take this opportunity of extending to the members of the Board our heartiest congratulations on their success.

The change from a weekly to a bi-daily was made at a venture, and the prospects for success were far from encouraging, and, consequently, so much greater is the commendation due those who have undertaken and have at last unquestionably proved the success of the project.

On account of the increased number of publications, the *Princetonian* has been able more fully to meet the demands of the college, and, in numerous ways, has proved its increased efficiency as an organ for the expression of college sentiment, and we only voice the unanimous opinion of all when we say that already the college has derived immediate benefits from "the new departure."

WE DESIRE to call attention to the change in the Editors' Table. Hereafter this department will be devoted to the review of books and magazines. This change has been made with a view to making this department of practical use to our readers. The large number of magazines subscribed to in college makes it impossible for the majority of students, with only a limited amount of time at their disposal, to look over all the magazines and select the best articles. It will be one of our chief aims in this department to refer briefly to the more prominent literary criticisms, stories and essays published in the leading magazines, also devoting some space to our college exchanges. The books reviewed will be "the books of the day." We hope that this change will be approved of by our readers, and that it will be of interest, as well as of service to them.

The Lit. Prizes.

WE HAVE thought best to make the following changes in the Prize System for the current year. Three prizes of twenty dollars each will be awarded as follows: one in

June for the best essay, one in September for the best story, and a third in March for the best series of contributions for the whole year. In addition to these, two prizes of ten dollars each will be awarded: one in November for the best sketch, and another in January for the best series of three poems published up to date. In adopting this system of prizes we hope to broaden the field for competition, and so give all contributors a chance. The prizes will be awarded on the same considerations that governed the distribution last year. No contributor is eligible to more than two prizes, and no prizes will be awarded for articles which fall below the standard. Only contributors are eligible for the prizes awarded for the sketch, the series of three poems, and the contribution prize in March. We would especially urge those members of '87 who intend to try for next year's board to start immediately, and let them remember that the change in the Prize System has been made so as to encourage a greater variety in the contributions. It may be well to reiterate the statement which has been so strongly emphasized by former boards, deprecating the writing of heavy articles. The most acceptable articles are those suited to awaken and maintain the interest of the college public.

A RECENT editorial in a well-known literary journal has taken exception to a statement made in the last number of the LIT., relating to the present tendencies of American fiction. The statement referred to was substantially as follows: The difficulty of laying the scene of a romance in this country is unappreciably great, as it is almost impossible to find material. From the fact that in the editorial the writer says that such a statement of the literary *possibilities* of the country should not go without question, it is evident that the exact idea has been misinterpreted. Reference was

not made to the latent possibilities, but the present existing conditions of American fiction.

The assertion that it is almost impossible to find sufficient material for a romance has been defended by Hawthorne, and more recently by Henry James, Jr. The term romance, as here used, is applied to the highest class of novels, of which the works of Hawthorne in America and Eliot and Thackeray in England are types. It is generally admitted that in American fiction there is a great lack of this highest class of novels. Why should this be so? All other branches of our literature are marked by the highest class of productions. Surely it is not because that peculiar genius which portrays life is entirely absent. We must rather attribute this fact to the present state of society. The period is formative in its character, and, as a critic has said, such a condition of society does not admit of the development of the analytical powers of mind, the all-important factor necessary in the production of any great romance.

"Small Latin and Less Greek."

IT IS generally admitted that the arguments for and against Harvard's new departure in the course of studies have been clearly presented to the public, and at present the impossibility of advancing any new arguments and the uselessness of expatiating on those already presented, must be acknowledged. That public sentiment will enter as a prominent factor in the final settlement of the question is undeniable, but just how great an influence it will exert is a debatable point. We cannot agree with the opinion expressed in an editorial of one of the New York newspapers, asserting that public sentiment and experience would exert a greater influence than "the words of learned

doctors." The question is one of too great importance to be settled in such a manner, and it has well merited that consideration which sooner or later will necessitate decision. A radical change of any existing system demands decision, and to leave the question as it stands would be a positive admission of irremediable evils inherent in both courses. To the many who prefer to simply watch and wait for the outcome of the contest it may appear rather early in the day to attempt to discern on which side the weight of public opinion will finally rest. There are, however, two facts indicative of the opinion of those interested in Collegiate Education in this country, showing that Princeton's Conservative System is more generally approved of than the Elective System, as adopted by Harvard. The first is the general tenor of opinion expressed in the press, and the second and most important fact is the attitude of Harvard and Princeton undergraduates and Alumni toward the courses adopted by their respective colleges. Harvard's course has met with opposition among Harvard men, while we can justly boast that a singular unanimity of feeling has prevailed among undergraduates and Alumni concerning our conservatism. It is especially noticeable that the rapidity with which the sentiment at Harvard has turned in favor of the "New Departure" is no less strongly marked than the radical characteristic of the change. Five years ago the New York *Sun* published a series of letters written by a Harvard graduate, the aim of these letters being to compare the English Universities with the American Colleges. Selecting Harvard as his standard for comparison in this country, the writer asserts the following: that a degree of B.A. obtained at Harvard means more work and greater comprehensiveness than the degrees obtained by the passmen at either Oxford or Cambridge. At present this writer is one of the most prominent advocates of a system which, if adopted by the colleges in this country, would make it possible for the majority of students at American colleges

to obtain the degree of B.A., and, at the same time, they would not be qualified to be pass-men at either Oxford or Cambridge. This is only one example of many similar cases that we have noticed, and the effect produced upon the public at large by the extreme rapidity of this change will greatly strengthen the stand Princeton has taken. There is one phase of the question on which many persons, and especially many college men, have formed an erroneous opinion. The amount of freedom allowed at Harvard in the choice of studies has generally been exaggerated, and for two reasons. From the very nature of the debate the positions taken by Harvard and Princeton appear to be extremes, and the freedom of the former and the conservatism of the latter have been greatly magnified. The recently published articles in the *Princetonian* on the Harvard Electives conclusively show that, owing to the conflicting arrangement of the hours for recitations and lectures, together with the comparatively large number of restrictions, the individual freedom in the choice of electives is not nearly so great as it is generally supposed to be. A number of instances were cited when, according to the Harvard Catalogue, eighteen and twenty exercises were simultaneously in progress, and so the large field of electives, from which the student can make his selections, is greatly narrowed.

The number of restrictions, such as those preventing a student from taking a certain course, unless he has taken certain other courses, and the number of prescribed courses that must be taken by those trying for honors, are strangely inconsistent with Harvard's profession, "perfect freedom in the choice of studies."

While we do not claim absolute perfection for our Elective System, its faults, if indeed they can be called faults, are of minor importance, and the committee of the Faculty, recently appointed, will undoubtedly bring the present System of Electives to even a greater degree of perfection.

Literary Gossip.

And as for me, though than I kon but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have him in reverence
So heartily, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,
But yt be seldom on the holy day,
Save, certeynly, when that the month of May
Is comen, and that I here the foules synge.
And that the flowres gynnen for to springe,
Farewel my boke, and my divocioun!

Chaucer, Prologue to Legend of Goode Women.

NO ONE has enjoyed the monthly talks of the Literary gossip more than the present gossip. To him they have been a constant source of enjoyment. They have led him into the dream-land of literature and inspired him with higher and truer ideals; but he fears that the mantel has fallen on unworthy shoulders, and that he who now sits in the gossip chair, at the monthly symposium, will not be able to entertain the large and increasing circle of readers of the LIT. If, however, with the mantel which has fallen upon him there should, at the same time, descend a double portion of his spirit who has just cast it off, there need be no fear of the result.

I took a peep into the haunt of "our old friend" the other day to have a pleasant little talk with him, and to see what sort of an abode he had anyhow. I had read so much in his tattle about it that I verily imagined it must be another Paradise, or some such place as the muses inhabit.

The old gossip was busy with his pen, but he greeted me with a smile and bade me be seated, then he entered heart and soul into the subject of the LIT. It was plain to be seen that the LIT. has a warm place in his heart. 'Twas wonderful, too, how enthusiastic he became over his books, and when he spoke of the pleasant times which he, together with the other "Immortals" who made up their Saturday Night Club had had, I felt how charming must have been the fellowship of the famous clubs of London in the days when Dr. Johnson and Burke and Garrick were members.

There is no way, after all, to cultivate a literary spirit so well as to talk with literary men. There is a certain sympathy, or sort of feeling existing between minds whose tastes are similar, that kindles into a flame the moment they come in contact. A good social chat with a man who has a soul to appreciate and admire that which is lovely in literature

will do more to inspire one than a thousand lectures on the subject. Literary men are so enthusiastic, so dreadfully in earnest, one cannot help agreeing with everything they say.

I once read the advice of a celebrated statesman—whose name I have forgotten—to a young friend on reading. "Read biography" said he; "there is nothing so stimulating, there is nothing that helps one so much as reading how others got started." It is excellent advice, and it is a great pity that so much time is wasted by students in reading those books which have no merit except a happy plot or a thrilling incident. Biographies are full of interest. They disclose the author apart from his works, and the mind which is far nobler than the works which it produced.

To any one wishing to satisfy himself as to the truth of these remarks I could recommend nothing better than the two biographies which have but recently been published—*The Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, by Julian Hawthorne, and that of George Eliot by Cross. In spite of the adverse criticisms with which these works have been met, there is a wonderful amount of fascinating reading in them.

They have advantages over many biographies in that their authors were both closely related to the subjects of their works, and could thus bring in many personal reminiscences of peculiar interest. I have felt my love for the works of Hawthorne and George Eliot increase a thousand-fold since reading their biographies.

"What new policy is the present gossip going to introduce in his department?" a very familiar friend somewhat irreverently inquired the other day; as if a gossip ever had any policy! "Policy," said I; "What do you mean by that?" "Why, I thought perhaps you might be going to put in some 'Original Spring Poetry,' or something of that kind." This, of course, was a reflection on the gossip's past life which he did not think it worth while to answer. "No, sir," I remarked; "the gossip will not have any particular policy. He will simply live in the literary atmosphere of the college, learn the thought, and dress it up in whatever style he may see fit; he may exhort a little, he may sing once in a while, and he may dream a good deal, but as for policy, there won't be any of that. The gossip is a dreamer, he belongs to the family of college dreamers, and has his whims and fancies, and sometimes he bores his friends with them, but he is oftener mistaken for a poller, because he lives by himself."

It is a pleasant atmosphere we live in here, among our libraries and halls and laboratories—every one can find congenial companionship and the fullest scope for his fancy. We seem to be more favored than our fathers were, and more even than the outside world imagines, at least if we can judge what it thinks by what it says. I have frequently read statements about the Puritan atmosphere of Princeton. One would almost think, to read them, that we are still living in the close atmosphere of the 17th century. A single peep into our college realm ought to convince the most credulous how absurd such an idea is.

We have been favored during the last winter with entertainments of almost every sort; music of the very highest quality; lectures on a great variety of subjects—art, literature, religion, science and philosophy. If anything is wanting in this line to the development of a higher taste the fault is our own. But I must not begin to lecture or you will say the gossip has forgotten himself already.

It is terrible to have to sit within and talk and write when the outside world is so gay, and when the air is full of music and laughter. There are times when one's heart would readily respond to the poet's lines—

"No more, no more
The worldly shore
Upbraids me with its loud uproar!
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise!"

But it is not in the month of May. When the trees are blooming and breathing their fragrance everywhere, and the air is soft and invigorating, it is no time to dream. You must leave that for autumn evenings or winter nights by the warm glow of the fireside; now you want to go out and mingle with the world and live with nature and inhale her life-giving breath.

Editors' Table.

WE PLUNGE bravely into what we hesitate to call "Critical Notes," or "Literary Reviews," or "Thoughts on Current Themes," or to give to it any other pretentious title. Yet a Table being a composite article, this department must, necessarily, contain a little of them all. The danger lies in the fact that too much variety is repugnant to taste, and a literary pot-pourri soon satiates. In literature, as well as life, fashions flourish and fade. Pick up almost any author, up to comparatively a short time ago. Each chapter has head-lines. Now, quotation is an art in itself. Again, it culls choice expressions otherwise to be forgotten, and, as a mere practicality, it is to a reader a foretaste of what follows. If our turn has come, we would choose, as the best expression of aims and aspirations, the Ciceronean epigram, "*Vitare est cogitare*," which, with a happy ambiguity, read backwards or forwards, in the style of the cabalistic charms of mediæval mystics, declares the same thing, and, being interpreted, meaneth either that life is not worth living apart from mental activity, or that thought is the very essence of life. We feel we have done our share in following an old custom. What Edward Everett, a generation ago, called "the dizzy activities of our times," have increased ten-fold since he wrote; one phase of letters in particular. Ours is pre-eminently the age of periodicals. Two causes readily account for this. On a development hypothesis, we may say that magazines, as well as newspapers, take the place of the pamphleteering, political and otherwise, of the last centuries. But the true solution is the hurry of the century, in which the magazine holds the middle ground between the "book learning" of the wise and the daily bulletin of the masses. Yet, from the wealth of material, "the months' magazines" (that comprehensive and convenient critical phrase) stand out.

The *Atlantic* does not, in quality, believe its alphabetical superiority over the others. Without dwelling on the exploded identity of Craddock, already an old theme, and the excellence of the author's delineations of hitherto unworked types, we find an interesting pathology of the "H" disease, by Prof. Proctor, who, with the peculiar advantage of having in his own family three sets of children of American and English parentage, could experimentally prove his theories, which are, that dropping the "h's" is of London origin, and due to hurry in business and laziness consequent on London fogs, and that "exasperation" is owing to emphasis. The article opposes views of Grant White, published a few months since in the same magazine. The latter critic has recently died, so there the controversy must end. The paper on Madam Mohl's Salon

and Friends is the last of a series. Interesting in itself, it suggests a genus of literature which we have neither the materials for nor are likely to have. Gilded Aristocracy may, after all, have some good points. Republicanism may be so rampant or Democracy so demagogish as to destroy the privacy of inner circles and literary coteries. It is true that the aristocracy of literature or art is restrictive. The most aristocratic period the world saw, that of Le Grand Monarque, gave Watteau in art, Boileau in letters, unsurpassed, but for the mannerisms which the *rigueur* of a court circle was responsible for. But the other side of the picture is different. The very restriction of a monarchy gives an indigenous growth. From the memoirs of Du Morny, De Retz and Saint-Simon, not to speak of the scandalous chronicles of a court society, down to the very latest development of this species of writing to which our century has given another turn, there is a long succession of most interesting works. In the very nature of the case, America can furnish no parallels. We are but just reaching one stage of these works, and, with difficulty, offer volumes akin to that of Yates' "Memoirs of Man of the World," while Remusat papers, Sévigny letters (of which a new collation has been made in a recent sketch, published abroad), and, for instances of social, aside from political ones, Lady Montague's or Sir Henry Holland's Recollections, with their bright, witty, quasi-charitable, and often spicy revelations, are out of the question. It is not so much that youth and undeveloped resources are in our way. But the lack of stability incident to a democratic form of government, and the need of a central sun around which society revolves, while it in reality offers greater advantages of intercourse, yet destroys the possibility of the exclusiveness and intimacy of restricted oligarchies, to which intrigues and jealousies, and society small-talk from which revolutions may result, are the necessary adjuncts. Henry James gives us a most sympathetic paper on George Eliot's "Life," which will, as he tells us, fail to satisfy the morbid curiosity of those who, from her peculiar position, expected "revelations." But after reading James' estimate of her work and workmanship we feel another dissatisfaction. James himself seems rather to regret what he calls the "indoor quality of Eliot." That "reflection and research" are indispensable accessories to Genius is true enough. But what lend attractions to Genius are oftentimes its very vagaries. Too many methodical habits or too much system does not accord well with the idea of a Genius which itself has few bounds. We had rather not have the veil withdrawn too much from the workshop. Again, Lewis "surrounded her with * * * a zone of independence—independence of everything except him, and her own standards, * * * and enabled her to achieve what was perhaps the highest form of her success—an inaccessibility to the newspaper." But such independence is really slavish fear of adverse criticism, and here, once more, though the irritability of Genius is proverbial, yet such statements destroy fond illusions as to the

true independence of a Genius' thought and action. The articles on "Childhood in Early Christianity," "Bach," and "A Bird-Lover's April," are each excellent in their line.

We can but voice the growing sentiment that *Outing* has sprung into the foremost rank of magazines. The May number contains another installment of Julian Hawthorne's new novel, "Love—or a Name." It is a typical American story, that promises some sharp satire on society, politics and business ways. Chapter eight, while a good picture of modern society youth, is an effective bit of contrast, coming so suddenly on the graver preceding portions of the story. "The Duplex or Dramatic Element of Life" is a careful exposition of the difference between the actual and possible, under other conditions, man, as represented to his own mind. The author claims the stage as a moving factor in "remembrance and reflection," as well as "transient amusement." The other articles are good. That Whist is a science is fully proved by the intricacies of the articles on that game. With all this, *Outing* preserves its special lines—bicycling, yachting, etc. *Harper's* has three descriptive papers—"España," "Through London by Canal," and the second part of a "Wild-Goose Chase," a journey among the dreary Danish dunes. The short stories are excellent. F. J. Stimson, the famous J. S. of Dale, has a capital piece in "Passages from the Diary of a Hong-Kong Merchant." The exquisitely pathetic story "Lady Archer," and "Constance Royal" both belong to the genus, psychological romance, which does not in the least detract from their interest. *Apropos* of the "new learning," there is an editorial, which we are sorry to see, takes almost the extreme modern view. The citing Cornell is an unfortunate example, for his University is gradually doing away with extreme liberty of choice, and coming to that medium ground which is held by the large majority of educators. We close our record with the *Century*, last in issue only. A graphic description of "The New Orleans Exposition," a thrilling account of "Greeley at Cape Sabine," a very deep essay on "Immortality and Modern Thought," the continued war papers, with poems, serials, etc., constitute a most interesting number.

Obiter Dicta, from the press of Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, is a most dainty little volume, in that simple-ornate style which the book-lover delights in. It is a collection of essays, evidently by a master hand, on current literary or social themes, such as Carlyle, Browning, Actors, and on past characters like Celleni and Falstaff, which for grace and interest can with difficulty be surpassed.

HALL OF THE CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETY, March 25th, 1885.

WHEREAS, It has pleased the heavenly Father to take from among our number Rev. William Harris, A. M., Treasurer of the College of New Jersey; AND WHEREAS, we, as a Society, feel deeply the loss of an esteemed friend and counselor; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we extend to the family, so suddenly bereaved, our warmest sympathy; and

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be published in the NASSAU LITERARY MAGAZINE, *The Princetonian*, and *The Princeton Press*.

GEORGE A. T. EDDY,
ALFORD KELLEY,
GEORGE REYNOLDS.

Calendar.

MARCH 27TH.—Clio Senior Speaking. First Prize, C. W. McClumpha; Second Prize, Robinson.

APRIL 3D.—Announcement of new members of *Princetonian* Board—'86, J. D. Baucus, C. R. Erdman, G. S. White; '87, J. Paige, L. Waggener; '88, W. M. Irvine.

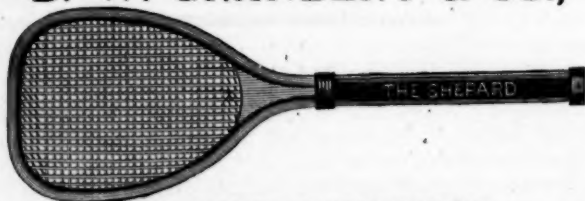
APRIL 8TH.—Baird Prizeman—First Baird Prize, C. F. McClumpha; Second prize, J. H. Cleveland; Prize for Oratory, W. H. Robinson; Poetry Prize, F. S. Woodruff. Prize for Disputation, First, Sherrard Depue; Second, J. W. Bayard.....Second term closed.

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